

requirements of Sections 1.114(a) and 1.103(c) and therefore request that the Office Action be withdrawn. Applicants' attorneys reviewed, by telephone, this Request with Examiner Nguyen and were informed by Examiner Nguyen that the Office Action will be withdrawn upon receipt of this Request.

The Advisory Action dated October 22, 2002 stated on the attached continuation sheet that Applicants' Request for Reconsideration dated October 3, 2002 "does NOT place the application [Claim 20] in condition for allowance because: prior art [Majette et al.] figure 12 clearly suggests that dots may be formed in [a] different order (i.e. MC, CM)." In response to this comment, Applicants have amended Claim 20 to define more clearly what Applicants regard as their invention, in terms that distinguish over Majette et al.

The aspect of the present invention set forth in Claim 20 is a print method capable of forming a color image by applying ink materials of plural colors in different amounts onto a print medium while scanning a recording head in two directions. The method includes a first step of applying an ink material of a certain color for forming a secondary color in at least one kind of amount onto a pixel area for expressing thereon the secondary color. The method also includes a second step of applying onto the pixel area an amount of ink material of another color for forming the secondary color in combination with the certain color, after the application of the ink material of the certain color. A third step of the method applies the ink material of the certain color in an amount onto the pixel area, after the application of the ink material of the another color. The ink materials in this method are applied onto the pixel area for expressing thereon the secondary color so that dots of the secondary color may be formed at plural positions of the pixel area with making different the orders of application of the ink materials of plural colors for forming the secondary color, the pixel area for expressing thereon the secondary color being one of the pixel areas formed on the print medium.

One important feature of Claim 20 is controlling the application of ink materials so that dots of a secondary color may be formed at plural positions of a pixel area on which the secondary color is expressed while making different the order of application of ink materials of plural colors for forming the secondary color.

Majette et al., as understood by Applicants, relates to a structure for scanning a record area in forward and backward directions (two scans). In Majette et al., dots recorded by the forwarded scan and dots recorded by the backward scan exist in a mixed manner on an area where the forward scan and the backward scan overlap. In a situation where a mixed color image of magenta (M) and cyan (C) is recorded with a record head having recording elements arranged along a scanning direction as shown in Figure 1, an image formed by applying inks in the order of M and then C, and an image formed by applying inks in the order of C and then M, exist in a mixed manner.

In the Majette et al. configuration, an image to be recorded by the forward scan and backward scan are produced by using a masking process. Therefore, at the area where the forward scan and the backward scan overlaps for recording, it is contemplated that a difference in coloring related to the application (or superposition) orders of ink materials is reduced. However, even if the masking process is utilized to produce the image to be recorded by the forward scan and the image to be recorded by the backward scan separately, the problem of a difference in coloring occurring in the forward and backward scans for recording is not perfectly removed, because there is a possibility that an image recorded by the determined direction (i.e. forward or backward) scans are biased depending upon the type of image to be recorded. Moreover, in Majette et al., Applicants note that Figures 2-5 show an area being subjected to recording by applying ink materials in the same order of ink application when a determined directional (i.e. forward or backward) scan is conducted for recording (for example, SWATH 2a, 2f as shown in Figure 2 and SWATH 3a, 3e as shown in Fig. 3). Applicants submit that these figures show that Majette et al. does not control the recording for each pixel area to reduce

unevenness in the color in the forward/backward scan. Applicants also submit that nothing has been found in Majette et al. that would teach or suggest controlling the application of ink materials so that dots of a secondary color may be formed at plural positions of a pixel area on which the secondary color is expressed while making different the order of application of ink materials of plural colors for forming the secondary color.

Accordingly, Applicants submit that at least for this reason, Claim 20 is patentable over Majette et al.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our New York Office by telephone at (212) 218-2100. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our address listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

  
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VERSION OF CLAIM 20 WITH MARKINGS SHOWING CHANGES (as of 1/15/03)

20. (Twice Amended) A print method capable of forming a color image by applying ink materials of plural colors in different amounts onto a print medium while scanning a recording head in two directions, said method comprising:

a first step of applying an ink material of a certain color for forming a secondary color in at least one kind of amount onto a pixel area for expressing thereon said secondary color;

a second step of applying in said amount onto said pixel area an ink material of another color for forming said secondary color in combination with said certain color, after the application of the ink material of said certain color; and

a third step of applying the ink material of said certain color in said amount onto said pixel area, after the application of the ink material of said another color,

wherein the ink materials are applied onto the pixel area for expressing thereon the secondary color so that dots of the secondary color may be formed at plural positions of the pixel area with making different the orders of application of the ink materials of plural colors for [expressing] forming the secondary color, said pixel area for expressing thereon the secondary color being one of said pixel areas formed on the print medium.

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